TYCI

FREE

CHRISTMAS
ANNUAL 2013 | ZINE 14

TYCI: YEAR ONE

2013 HAS BEEN A BIG YEAR FOR TYCI. FOR OUR FINAL ZINE OF THE YEAR, WE HAVE COLLECTED SOME OF OUR FAVOURITE ARTICLES FROM THE PAST 12 ISSUES, AS WELL AS SHARING SOME NEW FEATURES THAT ARE CURRENTLY ON OUR WEBSITE.

In this past year, we have been lucky enough to work with amazing musicians like LAW, Honeyblood, PINS, CHVRCHES, Bdy Prts and Siobhan Wilson, and book slammin' DJs like Pretty Ugly, Ladyfest, Marianne MWX, Tigerbeats and Jen Long. Our live events have supported charities like Scottish Women's Aid, The Eve Appeal, WestGAP, Marie Curie, Shelter and Rape Crisis. Our group of contributors grows every day, and we now receive submissions from writers and artists based across the world.

None of this could have happened without the people who support TYCI every day by coming to the events, reading the website, sharing their ideas and giving up their time. TYCI is a not-for-profit, volunteer-run organisation, and we all do this because we love it, and we're glad that you love it too.

TUCK YOUR CUNT IN AND HAVE A GREAT CHRISTMAS.

SEE YOU IN 2014.

Lauren Mayberry talks to Annie Hart and Heather D'Angelo from dream pop trio Au Revoir Simone.

AU REVOIR SIMONE HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR ALMOST A DECADE NOW. HOW HAVE THINGS CHANGED - MUSICALLY, PROFESSIONALLY, PERSONALLY - OVER TIME?

Heather: When we first started our band, it was a pre Facebook world - so yes, things have changed a lot. Social media has completely transformed the way that musicians interact with their fans. While I think it's a lot easier today to connect to your fan base, then there is also pressure to continuously feed the media machine by generating new content.

Annie: I'm definitely a lot more capable and relaxed than I used to be. We've had so many people share their musical knowledge with us over the years. Between that and endless touring, we've accumulated so much more musical and psychological capabilities than in the past. I also have a much better time at photoshoots / concerts / press events and feel like I can say 'no' more easily and just be comfortable in my own skin.

YOU ALL TOOK A BIT OF A STEP BACK FROM THE BAND A FEW YEARS AGO. WHY WAS THAT AND WHAT DID YOU ALL GET UP TO ON THE BREAK?

Heather: As you mentioned, we've been together for 10 years! We released 3 albums. It was just time for a break- we all have other interests and other lives, and it was time to tend them. I spend my time getting a second undergraduate degree in Environmental Biology from Columbia University, and spending lots of time with my wonderful husband, Alex.

Annie: Sometimes you just need to relax, and I was exhausted after our last round of touring. But holing up gave me time to write a hundred new songs and a revived free spirit.

TELL US ABOUT THE DAVID LYNCH CONNECTION.

Heather: David has been such a gracious supporter of our band. We're obviously tremendous fans of his work, and it's an honor that we're even on his radar! We're very lucky.

Annie: David is just incredible! He found out about us when we musically accompanied a book reading of his, and we've been friends ever since. He is one of those rare human beings who have strong charisma and integrity to match. He's an inspiring role model.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. FOR THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK. FOR MORE ON THE BAND, VISIT AUREVOIRSIMONE.COM.

YOU'RE THE ONE FOR ME, FATTY

By Halina Rifai

I was 10lb 8oz when I was born. Several years later my mother needed a pelvic floor repair because I had destroyed her. When I asked her what exactly her cravings were, she replied 'fruit' – the irony.

34 years on and I have grown proportionally to my birth weight, i.e. I am still a large mammal. When you are fat/overweight/chubby etc. it is the first thing you think about each day. I just want to dispel the theory that you don't think about food as soon as your eyes open. Other thoughts that have run through my head include 'what the hell am I going to wear to make me more inconspicuous' and 'I swear today is going to be my healthy day'.

My childhood never had a lack of food, when I first heard the phrase 'big boned' I latched onto it and looking back I can laugh now. My dad is Moroccan and as part of the culture, if you don't eat then it can be seen as a bit of an insult. My mother is British and came from the traditional Sunday Roast and 'Fish Friday' so food was constantly in abundance between them. I wouldn't exactly put them in the category of 'feeder'; they just cared about their kids and wanted to make sure they were provided for…

For a female being fat, the pressure is excruciating. You have heard all the clichés about magazine covers and the industry, for me it is not about that. It is more about wanting to wear the stuff that everyone is wearing. I love fashion, another myth that I would like to dispel. Just because I am a number of sizes larger does not mean I don't appreciate looking good. As everyone keeps saying 'you have such a pretty face', another phrase that makes me want to laugh. I often wonder when the full package will be accepted. A terrible admission on my part is that I often

look at skinny girls who make absolutely no effort with their appearance and scream on the inside as all I want to do is give them a makeover. I realise this makes me the biggest hypocrite on the planet as they are probably screaming on the inside at me saying 'lose some fucking weight and you could be so much prettier'.

Another pressure is the looks and the sniggers. For someone with something different on the inside such as depression it is way easier to hide. When I waddle into a room then everything is there for everyone to see. I was at a small music festival a few weeks back and this guy who had noticeable skin problems and a shit afro commented on how happy I looked. I replied 'well the music is wonderful', to which he replied 'it is a good job you are leaving then, you can make room for some other people'. It is really hard to not let something like that ruin your evening. As soon as he said it I immediately felt myself want to crawl into my own vagina and hide. The sinking feeling hits and then the paranoia sets in and your eyes start darting about to see who else is looking at you and laughing. It is heart-breaking.

I managed to shift a large portion of Halina a few years back, 6 stone to be precise. The attention became a bit weird and after a terrible break up the weight piled back on. Part of the reason I wanted to lose the weight was that I sat on an outdoor piece of furniture and it collapsed. It was very funny, but inside I died a little. Other thoughts that haunt me are if I have a bath and the combined weight of me and the water will mean that I end up in the downstairs neighbour's livingroom. Jesus Christ, I don't know who would shit themselves more.

Food is my personal evil; having managed to quit smoking without any real difficulty many people still cannot understand why I can't quit food. It is a vicious circle, you wake up on a Monday thinking that you are going to be good and before you know it, that extra mayonnaise is being piled onto the cheese that was leftover from the weekend. WHY DOES FOOD TASTE SO FUCKING GOOD…?

I am now in a relationship with someone that loves me, I still ask him why. No seriously, I do. I have this stupid idea that I don't want to embarrass him and make him look any less of a man because he is with a 'fatty'. Ironically, there is the 1992 hit by one of his heroes Morrissey called 'You're the One for Me Fatty' – I have decided we are therefore made for each other.

I suppose the point of this is that I am getting there. I guarantee when I walk into a room or past you, I will probably be thinking about what I look like more than you will and hopefully it is more of my personal gremlin than yours, just don't pull up a garden chair for me. PLEASE.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. FOR THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK. HALINA ALSO RUNS GLASGOWPODCART.COM AND OLIVEGROVERECORDS.COM.

Gretchen King writes about growing older, and the additional pressure on women that comes with age.

We live in an age-obsessed society that is plenty cruel about ageing. Almost anywhere you look are messages telling us how to look younger (I mean, really. Shame on you for looking your age!) or why ageing is not ideal. The beauty industry, filled with their magical age defying creams and youth enhancing serums, is a multi billion dollar industry. If they can't sell you age preventative products, what can they sell you? Death? Because that is one of the few alternatives to not ageing.

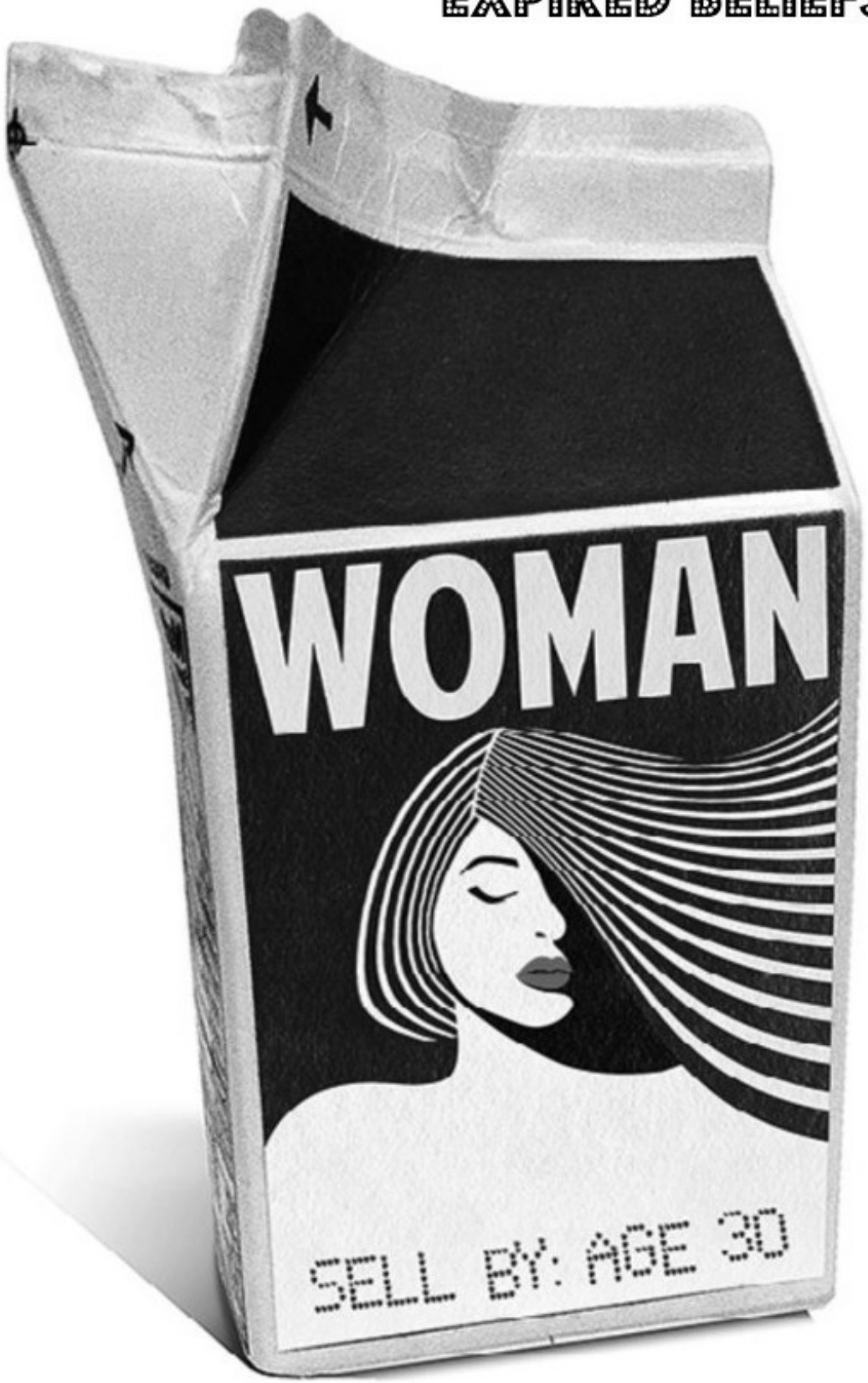
My younger self (who was often complimented on looking older than I really was - how's that for a double standard) was convinced that during my thirties my dreams would come true and I would sink softly into my ideal self, confident in my pursuits and successful by my standards. As I left my twenties behind, I found myself more sensitive to society's subtle (and often times blatant) jabs that left me wondering, 'What really is so wrong with being 30?!' and feeling somewhat guilty that I had finally turned the big 3-0. The subtle jabs go something like this: 'Wow! You look great for your age!', paired with an honest look of bewilderment as though one is truly impressed by the youthful genes that have been bestowed upon you. Or how about this common situation: A child is asked how old they think a woman is. The child answers an age that is younger than the woman really is. Child is applauded and gushed at for their 'adorable' answer. 'Good job!' is usually the adult's response. Not only does that reinforce a woman's fear of ageing, but now you've brought an innocent child into the mix!

I would certainly never tell a child that she can be whomever she wants but 'Only if you achieve it by 30. God, cause once 30 comes around... lie about your age and do everything you can to avoid wrinkles.' So why do I hear these thoughts rolling around upstairs when I feel utter shit about my progress in life? [Surely magazine covers with their headlines and hours of photoshopping wrinkles away have nothing to do with this...] As the years go by I will without a doubt find myself uncovering wrinkles upon wrinkles but I will also be revealing more depth to who I am and what I can offer this world that extends far beyond any societal view of 'beauty' or 'youth'. I cannot imagine applying an age limit to the amount of time it may take to reveal one's most authentic self.

Word of warning: there is no amount of age defying cream that can cover up a lack of courage. And to be a woman who pursues her dreams and desires does take courage. In a world so quick to throw out an aging woman like spoiled milk, what I find rotten is how we willingly hold ourselves back simply because of our age and the beliefs we may have unwillingly subscribed to. It's time to recognize that it is society's limited beliefs that have truly expired and not you. So I close this with the grave suggestion that you live your life as though the only 'Sell By' date is the one they'll be cleverly placing on your tombstone.

FOR MORE OF GRETCHEN'S WORK, VISIT GRETCHENKING.COM.

ISN'T IT TIME TO THROW OUT EXPIRED BELIEFS?



www.tyci.org.uk

ladyCHAT

LADYCHAT IS A BRAND NEW FEATURE RUNNING ON THE TYCI SOCIAL NETWORKS. WE GIVE YOU YOUR DAILY DOSE OF GRRRRL BY SHARING INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES BY OR ABOUT WOMEN. CHECK THEM OUT ON OUR TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM (@TYCIBLOG), OR VISIT FACEBOOK.COM/TYCIBLOG.

YOU LEARN THAT THE ONLY WAY TO GET ROCK-STAR POWER AS A GIRL IS TO BE A GROUPIE AND BARE YOUR BREASTS AND GET CHOSEN FOR THE NIGHT. WE LEARN THAT THE ONLY WAY TO GET ANYWHERE IS THROUGH MEN. AND IT'S A LIE.

Kathleen Hanna

www.tyci.org.uk

WHY I HEART SINEAD O'CONNOR

Emily Molloy writes about her love of the Irish musician.

Sinead O'Connor has been a controversial character for as long as I can remember. You just have to look at her to know that she doesn't take shit. Growing up partly in rural Ireland myself, I know how easy it is to be uncomfortable in your own skin. The hills have eyes and they're all seeing, all judging. Sinead O'Connor was and is the antithesis of this. She is, in my eyes, one of the finest Irish icons. It's a little known fact that O'Connor was sent to the Magdalene sisters when she was fifteen. Eleven years later she ripped a picture of the Pope on Saturday Night Live.

Personally I think this was a vulgar statement, but no more vulgar or crass than statements the Catholic church has released on the subject of child abuse, homosexuality and safe sex. Her passion against the crimes of organised religion do not come from simply reading about it but living surrounded by it. With church-sponsored sexual abuse to church-sponsored war, just a short drive from her hometown, this was always going to manifest itself in some form. Public and personal expression through art, I would say, is the healthiest way to go about it. And she managed to spark discussion.

"Spark discussion?!" I hear you say. Yes, the Miley Cyrus debate. It was the conversation on pretty much everyone's lips last month… O'Connor again managed to pick a subject that she feels strongly about, and worked the media into a furore. It got somewhat off track as she wanted to create a discussion about exploitation and the destruction of the music industry for the power of good, but how much can anyone really control the direction of a media circus? The way it played out still managed to raise her points and the big pink feminist pandora's box of sexual objectification in the music industry.

The beautiful, award-winning musician has suffered from mental health problems, sought help and spoken openly about it. This alone makes me love her. I have suffered from depression and I know lots of people who have suffered or are suffering from a wide variety of conditions. To seek help can be hard and any encouragement offered by celebrities or otherwise should be welcomed. That is why she is amazing and why I heart her.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. FOR THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK.

BEYONCÉ AND THE MRS CARTER SHOW

Natasha Radmehr waxes lyrical on the Beyoncé / The Mrs Carter Show situation.

Oh no, not another opinion piece about bloody Beyoncé's world bloody tour! Yes, I'm afraid so. But bear with me…

I suppose I should start by saying that I write for a wedding magazine. Prior to writing for this magazine, my knowledge of weddings was limited at best. They rarely crossed my mind, in the same way that my thoughts never linger on golf or Keane, because I wasn't that interested in them. Sorry, need to pause for a moment. Just thinking about the people out there who like golf and Keane, and feeling deeply troubled.

Ok. Where was I? Oh yes - weddings. I didn't - and still don't, not really - know what my own wedding might be like, or even if I wanted to get married at all. Since starting this job almost two years ago, I've learned a lot; not only about what a good wedding dress looks like (turns out they don't all look the same…who knew?), but about how many sexist wedding traditions are still blindly, unquestioningly adhered to in the UK. Most brides are still walked up the aisle and given away by their dad; the speeches are expected to be given by the groom, best man and father of the bride while the women zip it and cringe; the white dress that a bride wears has over time come to symbolise the virginity that she most likely hasn't possessed since she was 16 and steaming (originally, though, white was supposed to represent wealth); and it's generally taken for granted that the bride will take her husband's surname.

This last custom has been the subject of some serious internet grumblings this week, ever since Beyoncé announced her upcoming world tour, titled The Mrs Carter Show. Even though she and Jay Z both reportedly changed their surnames to Knowles-Carter after getting married in 2009, and in spite of the fact that she's still usually referred to in the media as Beyoncé Knowles, Queen B has decided to allude to her marital status with what Grace Dent has scathingly called 'a homespun merchandising moniker fragrant with Good Housekeeping notions of baked peach cobblers' (The Independent, February 6th).

I understand where Grace's cynicism is coming from. She thinks that in using the name Mrs Carter, Beyoncé is defining herself as a wife in order to have a new persona that'll encourage ticket sales and give her fodder for her next few albums. Kind of like when Madonna reinvents herself by finding a new way for her vagina to come out and say hiya. But rather than having the Madonna effect of making young girls immediately want to put ten pairs of trousers on, there's a concern that Beyoncé's impressionable fans will merely aspire to that day when they too can get married and become Mrs Guynextdoor, rather than flicking the Vs to tradition and keeping their own name.

However, I think the Mrs Carter

Show is simply Beyoncé's snappy way of saying 'hey fans! since my last tour I've got married and dropped a sprog!'. Historically, her tour names have been unimaginative and a little bit shit. Her 2003 tour was called 'Dangerously in Love', 2007's was 'The Beyoncé Experience', and 2009's was simply 'I Am…'. You're what, Bey? Unsure how to finish that title? I would view The Mrs Carter Show as a weird business move if she stopped writhing around in leather to instead don a pinny and sing about how amazing it is to hoover the (homemade) cake crumbs out of Jay Z's ballsack, but so far that's not happened. I would find the fact that she didn't call it The Mrs Knowles-Carter Show odd, were it not for the fact that hyphenated names look stupid enough on a Christmas card envelope, let alone a poster. I don't think it's out of character for her (or any popstar) to reference a new chapter in her life. Her performance and songs are still going to leave those who see her live, man or woman, feeling empowered.

Perhaps Beyoncé should have considered the fact that she's reinforcing a convention that prioritises men, but then again, maybe it's become such an ingrained norm that it didn't cross her mind. Maybe she just likes the way Mrs Carter sounds. Just because Beyoncé sings about independent women and single ladies, it doesn't make her Germaine fucking Greer. I absolutely believe that no woman should feel pressured into taking her husband's surname in order to be a 'proper' wife; but equally, it's unhelpful to slate those who actually want to do it. It doesn't make you a bad feminist. I think that couples now tend to view sharing a surname - whether that's the man's, woman's or a hybrid of both - as being a symbol of unity, as opposed to ownership. That notion is abhorrent to some and appealing to others. What's the problem, so long as a considered decision is being made?

The best thing we can do is educate young women at school and at home about the fact that they actually have a choice, rather than assume that the responsibility for doing so lies with a popstar. Feminism should be taught as part of social education at schools, rather than be reduced to a solitary history lesson on the Suffragettes. Girls should be encouraged to analyse and question traditions like this that make no sense. So fuck if celebrities are influential. We can be too.

FOR MORE OF NATASHA'S MUSINGS, HEAD TO NATASHARADICAL.BLOGSPOT.CO.UK.

RULE OF THREE*

BY
HELEN WRIGHT
AND
JENNY SPEIRS

*A TRUE STORY TOLD TO THE WRITER BY A FRIEND.

HEY LOOK! LESBIANS!
DON'T THINK I CAN
THIS ANYMORE
SURE YOU DON'T NEED A MAN IN THERE?

THE PINK SARI GANG

Catriona Reilly writes about the Pink Sari Gang, a group of vigilantes in Utter Pradesh.

All around the world there are bad ladies dealing with brothers and sisters flaking and perpetrating - and I don't mean 'bad' in the traditional sense or even the Azealia Banks sense. I mean ladies genuinely instigating real and lasting social change.

One group of women doing just that are the Gulabi Gang or the 'Pink Sari' gang (so-called for their uniform of choice) and they're doing a pretty fine job of flipping the script. The gang are a group of female vigilantes dealing primarily with issues that affect women within Indian society, such as domestic abuse, rape, dowry, child marriage, acid attacks, female illiteracy, feticide and the general 'put up and shut up' attitude towards women. Unlike many other female activist groups, the Gulabi gang don't just throw placards in the air or push petitions; they go straight to the perpetrator and extract their own raging justice.

Aside from their unorthodox methods, what makes their efforts particularly flossy is the fact that they operate in the Northern Indian Bundelkhand district of Uttar Pradesh. The region is rife with poverty, starvation, violence, corruption and a rigid adherence to both patriarchy and the oppressive Indian caste system. Life in Bundelkhand is hard for anyone, and for women especially it is a constant struggle, but does this make the gang's modus operandi a necessity or are their tactics still morally acceptable?

Founded in 2006, the gang was established by Sampat Pal Devi who was herself a child bride at the age of 12, married off to a man eight years her senior. She founded the gang after intervening in a case of domestic abuse which led to the husband violently retaliating and abusing Sampat herself. Unlike many of the region's downtrodden women, she didn't just brush her shoulders off. She returned the next day with a posse of ladies to beat the man upside the head with her laathi, a traditional bamboo fighting stick which all members of the gang carry...

The gang fights to establish equal rights in education for rural woman who are often deliberately denied access to basic schooling, meaning many women are illiterate and unemployed. Another important aspect of the gang's work is to help women set up their own businesses to free themselves from crushing poverty, as well as organising non-violent rallies and marches to expose oppressive men and working to 'redomesticate' women who have been thrown out or beaten by their husbands. The gang threatens said husband, telling them to take better care of their wives or else they'll be back to give him a good rattling…

Regardless of the moral question, without the Gulabis a large number of women in Uttar Pradesh would still be suffering. Besides, the empowerment they make women feel is just as fierce as any strike from a laathi. It is this empowerment that will hopefully nurture a mass societal change brought about through discourse and fair political progress, not just beatdown madness.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. FOR THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK

Ladysounds

LADYSOUNDS IS A BRAND NEW FEATURE ON THE TYCI SOCIAL NETWORKS. EVERY MONDAY, WE POST A PICTURE PERTAINING TO A THEME AND ASK YOU TO SEND US SUGGESTIONS OF SONGS BY FEMALE BANDS AND MUSICIANS TO GO IN A PLAYLIST TO DO WITH THAT TOPIC. EVERY SUNDAY, WE SHARE 15 OF THE BEST TUNES ON 8TRACKS.

SEND YOUR TRACK SUGGESTIONS TO CONTACT.TYCI@GMAIL.COM OR HIT US UP ON FACEBOOK.COM/TYCIBLOG, TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM (@TYCIBLOG).

Lis Ferla talks to the Scottish all-female comic collective.

When Glasgow comic artist Gill Hatcher decided to found her own women-only comic collective, she wasn't setting out to make some sort of big political statement.

'I just thought it would be quite fun to make a comic that was all women,' she explains. 'After I left school I was inspired by people I was involved with in the Glasgow comics scene to make my own little photocopied zines and start selling them locally, but at the time it really was a bit of a boys' club and I felt like my stuff didn't fit very well alongside a lot of the comics that were getting made at the time.'

Four years later, Team Girl Comic is now a thriving, financially sustainable small press with stockists across the UK. The collective is about to publish its eighth issue, to be launched with a circus-themed extravaganza at Glasgow's Plan B Books this Friday. The collective is almost thirty members strong, according to their website, according to their website, but new contributors - of any skill level - are always welcome. As long as they have a story to tell.

Gill and co-editor Claire Yvette never really considered themselves to be comics fans when they were growing up, regardless of how many times they picked up the Beano or Twinkle. For Gill, drawing 'silly, crudely-made comics' was a way of passing time in boring classes and making her friends laugh in school. 'Eventually, it just sort of clicked: I like drawing, and I make these comics, and people actually like them and they think that they are funny so why don't I actually try to draw the comics well and see if that works out?' she says. It turned out that she was rather good at it, and meeting some of the inspiring people of the Glasgow indie comics scene was enough to keep her going.

The first couple of issues featured friends and family, including Claire and sister Jessica - but the project was soon to snowball. 'I've always written, but I tend to be quite guarded about what I show people - but because Gill was involved in Team Girl, I thought I'd give it a go,' Claire says. 'I think like a lot of people I had always

equated comics with superheroes and a scene that was completely alien to me, so despite reading the Bunty or Calvin and Hobbes I never thought that counted. It's only in the past couple of years I've come to realise that comics don't need to be DC or Marvel, and I have gotten into more graphic novels and indie comics.'

Not that there isn't a place for superheroes, both in Team Girl itself and among its artists' influences. Coralie, who draws under the pen name Cacachute, started drawing comics two years ago as a way to write and tell stories 'without necessarily having to be the best, most literary writer'. After overcoming her initial shyness to get involved with the collective, Coralie has been able to channel her love of sci-fi, horror and 'classic' superhero stories into her contributions to the comic.

It's for this reason that the comics themselves rarely have explicit themes, although on a few occasions these have emerged by accident as an issue has come together. It's something Gill feels quite strongly about as part of the inclusive, non-elitist nature of the comic. 'I've always been wary of themes, as a lot of our artists are quite new to the comics scene and I don't want to make the task more difficult,' she says. 'We haven't ruled it out, and we might do a themed issue one day. But Team Girl is a platform for any female-identified writers in or from Scotland who have a story to tell, whether or not they come from an artistic background and whatever their style, be it fiction or non fiction...'

In terms of content, although recent issues have seen a trend towards autobiographical stories the Team Girl manta seems to be that if you can make a book about something, you can also make a comic about it. Gill likes to channel her interest in conservation issues into wildlife comics, featuring animal characters and nature facts, while Coralie enjoys drawing 'spaceships and monsters'. 'It's a medium with rules, just like cinema or literature, but those are the only limitations on how you tell the story,' Coralie says. 'If anything it's more experimental - and really open as well, as an art form…'

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. FOR THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK. FOR MORE ON TEAM GIRL COMIC, VISIT TEAMGIRLCOMIC.COM. LIS ALSO BLOGS AT LASTYEARSGIRL.PIXLET.NET.

LAURA DOCKRILL

Amanda Aitken catches up with the poet, illustrator and writer to talk about the crazy world of children's books.

YOU SEEM TO HAVE YOUR FINGERS IN QUITE A LOT OF CREATIVE PIES. WHERE DO YOU FIND THE INSPIRATION FOR ALL YOUR CREATIVE OUTPUTS?
Even though the majority of my inspiration ends up producing text and words, I wouldn't say necessarily that books were always my largest inspiration. You can find inspirational words and phrases being thrown around every day; in film and TV, in art and fashion, in the media, in the street, in the supermarket even. It's just about keeping that alert sensory system switched on to soak it all up. In terms of the poetry and writing I just don't see them different at all. I go about everything I create with an open head and see what happens (which doesn't always work for obvious reasons).

WHAT DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE DONE IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY TO READ OR WRITE POETRY? I am passionate about words and I feel like what enough people don't realise is that poetry is actually the most free and playful form of writing there is. There are no boundaries. It's all the best bits of fiction, storytelling, songwriting, playwriting and journalism all pushed in to one. I think if poetry wasn't taught so difficult young people would like it more, if they knew it didn't have to rhyme. I think these things would start opening the gate up for them a little more. I always refer to Jay-Z's book Decoded when speaking to young people, a beautiful hardback book where Jay-Z annotates and dissects his poetry and it is powerful and fantastic. Rap is poetry. Poetry is rap. And I don't think rap is struggling to inspire or influence.

AND FINALLY, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUNG WRITERS?
Be true to yourself and your experience. Try every idea. There is no such thing as a bad idea. You can recycle ideas- it's not stealing. Share your work from the start, the longer your cling the harder it is to let go. Live your life- be open to every experience. Keep a dictaphone or get an iPhone with recording app. Keep a notebook or pen with you always. Eavesdrop of conversations. Don't throw anything away.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. FOR THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK. FOR MORE ON LAURA'S WORK, VISIT LAURADOCKRILL.CO.UK.

HAUS OF PINS PRESENTS

HYMNS

CHRISTMAS COMPILATION
CASSETTE FEATURING

PINS
ABJECTS
MISTOA POLTSA
'KING DJ
SEPTEMBER GIRLS
(FEATURING THE # 1's)
BROWN B
THE SUP
GIR
S
ZISSO
L'AMOU
POST WAR GL RLS

HAUS OF PINS HAVE RELEASED A LIMITED EDITION COMPILATION CASSETTE TO SUPPORT CHARITY THIS CHRISTMAS.

HYMNS FEATURES SONGS FROM BELLA UNION SIGNING / TYCI PALS PINS, ALONGSIDE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE LIKES OF POST WAR GLAMOUR GIRLS, SEPTEMBER GIRLS AND BROWN BROGUES. ALL PROCEEDS FROM HYMNS WILL BE GIVEN TO SWAP, A CHARITY THAT HELPS REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS IN THE NORTH.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT HAUSOFPINS.CO.UK.

OUT DECEMBER 2013

GUERRILLA GIRLS ON TOUR

TYCI's Hanna Barbaric spoke to Aphra Behn, an activist involved with the theatre collective Guerrilla Girls On Tour.

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WHO ARE THE GUERRILLA GIRLS?

The Guerrilla Girls started in 1985 to address sexism and discrimination in the art world. They were formed by a bunch of visual artists who made posters which they would put up in Soho - the heart of the New York art scene at the time - using humour to get their point across. People were intrigued as to who was putting up these funny posters about whether women had to be naked to get into the Met Museum - as a subject of the art rather than as an artist.

WHAT'S WITH THE MASKS?

Since the beginning, the press has wanted to interview us but we've always wanted to be anonymous. Each member of the group takes on the name of a dead female artist and whenever we're in public, we wear the gorilla masks to conceal out true identities. The reason we do this is because we want the focus to be on the issues instead of on ourselves. In the beginning, the Guerrilla Girls were concerned that people would think that we were doing this to further our own careers, so anonymity has been a very important part of the campaign.

YOU ARE INVOLVED IN GUERRILLA GIRLS ON TOUR, THE THEATRE AND PERFORMING ARTS ARM OF THE GROUP. WHEN WAS IT DECIDED THAT DISCRIMINATION IN OTHER ARTFORMS WOULD BE LOOKED AT TOO?

In 2001, there was what we now refer to as 'the Banana Split' whereby we split into three separate branches, meaning there are now three different groups of Guerrilla Girls, one of which is Guerrilla Girls On Tour, which is all the theatre girls from the old group. Our focus is on creating plays, performances and street theatre which looks at sexism, discrimination or any issue relating to women's rights in the performing art world.

WHAT KIND OF WORK DOES WE ARE THEATRE DO?

Every year we do an annual list, exposing theatres across the US who aren't producing plays by women. We were invited to participate in the Women Playwrights International Conference and there we met women from all over the world who confirmed to us that sexism is a problem not only in theatre in the US, but internationally. We decided that instead of making up stickers or posters about it, we would try to organise something in at least the American community which would be a protest in the form of a 'speak out'. We invited all the playwrights we knew to write a play about sexism and we presented them in New York last year.

WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT FOR WOMEN TO GET TAKEN SERIOUSLY IN THE ARTS?

I think there is a lot of discrimination still prevalent in the arts which people don't mention, and that's what we aim to do - get people talking about it. There are huge theatre companies such as the Goodman Theatre in Chicago as well as the Roundabout Theatre in New York City who produce seasons which don't contain any plays by women, and they don't think there's anything wrong with that, and they don't seem to be responding to our call. We're hoping we can encourage people to make a stand and not buy tickets from these companies who are really only giving their audiences what they think their audiences want to see, which is plays by white men. On Broadway last year, there was only one female playwright. We're being told what we should think theatre is and they are discriminating against other voices. There are female playwrights all over the place but they happen to be doing their work off-Broadway.

HOW DO WE FIX THIS?

We don't have a solution to the problem, we just want to make people aware of the issues and help people come together as a community to combat this kind of discrimination.

WHAT ARE YOUR UPCOMING PLANS?

We'll be touring our signature performance called Feminists Are Funny which focuses on contemporary women's issues and changes every time a new issue arises. March is Women's History Month and April is Sexual Violence Awareness Month, so we tour a lot around those times.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO POTENTIAL ACTIVISTS?

If you don't have a lot of time, it's as simple as writing a letter or signing a petition or making a donation to companies who do support the cause you believe in. You could form your own Guerrilla Girl type groups in your hometown addressing local issues. It doesn't tale a lot of effort to try to raise awareness, and it can be done in very small ways. Guerrilla Girls in essence was started by a very small handful of women and we still mainly work that way, in small groups within the whole.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. FOR THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK OR GGONTOUR.COM.

GOOD MENTAL

Rosie Davies writes about, well, life.

You're getting on with your day, minding your own business, enjoying a comfortable feeling of neutrality and then BANG, you bump into someone and they ask you the worst question in the world.

'What have you been up to?'

If this question does not fill you with a low-level sense of dread, then don't bother reading the rest of this post - you don't need it. In fact, I'm surprised

you've even found the time to read it what with all the wonderful things you've have filled your life with. If, on the other hand, this question fills you with a building, rushing impulse to shout 'Fuck off!' and run in the other direction, then stay with me.

I started thinking about why I dreaded it so much for a rather embarrassing reason. I'd bumped into someone on a break from work and, of course, he asked the inevitable question - because that's what normal people do. They might trick you by wording it slightly differently, but it's the same thing no matter how you phrase it. They want things: a list of cold, hard things which you've achieved.

Without realising it, I've got a little routine on the go. First I say, 'Oh, you know, same old, SAME OLD, just PLODDING ON!' and then I laugh a little too forcefully ('Ha HAAA!') and turn the conversation right back to where it should have stayed - with them. 'But enough about me, how about you? Started up a new club night, eh? Moving to Australia, eh? Living the dream! Ha HAAA!'
So on this occasion, I did my little spiel, and it turns out the person in question had been to a club night which was exactly the kind of thing I should

have attended - 'should' because some friends were DJing at it, I knew a few people going, I'd said yes on Facebook and, all in all, it was exactly the kind of socially relevant and appropriate thing I should have been seen at.

Well, I didn't go, but instead of saying 'You know what, the night came round, there was a slight drizzle, I had my heart set on a bag of spring rolls and I really couldn't be bothered speaking to anyone', I found myself pretending I'd been. This is fairly hard to admit as even I can see that it makes me sound mentally unstable at best and an untrustworthy rat at worst, but I'm taking consolation in the fact that while I was saying it there was at least a voice in my head whispering, in a numb, curious way, 'What are you doing?' which I think was my consciousness doing an albeit fairly rubbish job of keeping me on the sane train.

Given that he had actually been there and, as such, his response was the sweetly confused 'But... You weren't there', it made for a rather awkward - no, mortifying - conversation in which I had to then admit that I just made it up because 'I thought it sounded better'…

But why do we do this? Surely the answer isn't so simple as a basic fear of social judgement? To recall another frustrating example, I recently met up with a couple I hadn't seen for two years. I did the 'same old' routine (it really is something to behold now) and thought I'd got off lightly but, somewhere in the middle of an otherwise enjoyable evening discussing their continual cycle of new jobs, new friends, exciting shifts in location and all the other things categorised under Reasons Why Our Life Is Brilliant And Yours Is Less So, one half of the couple turned to me and, looking into my eyes in what I think was intended to be a meaningful way, said, 'The way I see it, you can't go backwards, you need to always go forwards.'

Hang on a minute. Backwards? I may not have reported any particularly groundbreaking changes but... backwards?! Fucking hell…

Instead of experiencing the question like a vicious punch in the face, take a second to reinterpret it as: what's happened to you recently which has made you think? Or provided some happiness or unhappiness; a shift in perspective or a new discovery about yourself or the world? Because really, that's what you've been upto. That's all a new job is, or meeting a new person, or a weekend away. So take a deep breath, smile, and prepare to bore the world with your mundane reflections on life in the knowledge that this is the bare bones of life, and we're all living it, no matter where we are or what we've been up to.

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JANUARY TYCI

FOR OUR FIRST EVENT OF **2014**, TYCI RETURNS TO BLOC WITH A LIVE SET FROM BRAND SPANKING NEW GLASWEGIAN LADY SUPERGROUP **SKINNY DIPPER** WITH **FLOYD** ON THE DJ DECKS

SATURDAY 18 JANUARY
11PM TILL 3AM
BLOC, 117 BATH STREET, GLASGOW
FREE BEFORE MIDNIGHT;
2 POUNDS AFTER

FREE ALL NIGHT IF YOU WRITE TYCI ON YOUR KNUCKLES

The latest episode of the TYCI podcast is online now and can be found at soundcloud.com/tyciblog. Our next Subcity show will be Thursday 2 January, 5 - 7pm. Tune in at subcity.org/shows/tyci.

TYCI is a collective run by women.
We have a website where we write about things which affect us and put together features on art, theatre, music, film, politics, current affairs and most things in between. We also talk about similar stuff on our monthly radio show on Subcity.

This zine is a collection of some of the content from our site and is distributed in conjunction with our monthly live event at Bloc.

If you would like to get involved, reply to any of our articles or just generally say hi, hit us up on contact.tyci@gmail.com or visit tyci.org.uk.

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